

~~Top Secret~~**YUGOSLAVIA: Situation Remains Tense in Belgrade**

Sporadic clashes between police and demonstrators opposed to the regime of Serbian leader Milosevic continued yesterday, but federal forces brought in Saturday were beginning to withdraw from the center of Belgrade. Federal Presidency representatives from Croatia and Slovenia voted against the deployment—the second such use of the Army within a week—and refused to participate in yesterday's followup Presidency session. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Croatian and Slovene leaders, who will view the Army's action as further evidence that military and Serbian leaders remain intransigent, probably will step up preparations for unilateral secession and may expect increased Western sympathy for their aspirations. The rapidly deteriorating economic situation in Serbia and growing demands for free press and political liberalization will lead Milosevic to use greater force to maintain power. The continued detention of Serbian nationalist leader Vuk Draskovic—arrested on Saturday—could help rally the opposition, triggering further confrontations in Belgrade. Hardliners in the Army will argue that the latest clashes show that a broader crackdown is necessary to contain violence. [REDACTED]

~~Top Secret~~

11 March 1991